

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SINGAP 05283 020948Z  
ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 INR-07  
NSAE-00 USIA-06 /047 W  
-----030450 020952Z /15

P 020830Z DEC 77  
FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9092  
INFO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY  
AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 5283

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: SREF, SN  
SUBJ: PROPOSED SINGAPORE TRANSIT CENTER FOR INDOCHINESE REFUGEES

REF: (A) SINGAPORE 5242, (B) STATE 285189

1. EMBOFFS BRIEFLY DISCUSSED THE PROPOSED SINGAPORE REFUGEE TRANSIT CENTER WITH MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS PERMANENT SECRETARY LUM CHOONG WAH DURING A NOVEMBER 30 RECEPTION AT AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE. LUM INDICATED THAT THE GOS WAS ACTIVELY STUDYING THE PROBLEM ALTHOUGH A PLAN FOR THE CENTER HAS YET TO BE FORMULATED. WITHIN THE NEXT WEEK LUM PLANS TO INSPECT A POSSIBLE SITE FOR THE CENTER ON PULAU TEKONG, AN ISLAND OFF THE NORTHEAST COAST OF SINGAPORE. PULAU TEKONG IS CURRENTLY USED BY THE SINGAPORE ARMED FORCES FOR TRAINING AND HOUSES A CAMP RUN BY THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE, WHOSE CONSENT WOULD BE NEEDED TO ESTABLISH A REFUGEE CAMP THERE.

2. LUM SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS ENCOUNTERING A NUMBER OF PROBLEMS AND QUESTIONS IN ATTEMPTING TO  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SINGAP 05283 020948Z

WORK OUT A PLAN FOR ESTABLISHING THE CAMP. THE SINGAPOREANS WERE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED THAT THE CAMP, ONCE ITS EXISTENCE BECAME KNOWN, WOULD QUICKLY ATTRACT MANY MORE REFUGEES THAN IT COULD ACCOMMODATE. THIS APPEARED EVEN MORE LIKELY WITH THE INCREASINGLY TOUGH ATTITUDE BEING TAKEN BY THAILAND AND MALAYSIA AND THE GROWING HOSTILITY TOWARDS REFUGEES IN AUSTRALIA.

IN LIGHT OF THIS ANTICIPATED HEAVY DEMAND, LUM FELT THAT HIS MINISTRY WOULD HAVE TO DEVELOP SOME TYPE OF PRIORITY SYSTEM FOR ADMITTING REFUGEES INTO THE CAMP. (HE DID NOT INDICATE WHAT MIGHT BE DONE WITH REFUGEES WHO ARRIVED IN SINGAPORE BUT WERE FOUND INADMISSIBLE.)

3. ANOTHER SERIOUS PROBLEM THE GOS WAS WRESTLING WITH, LUM SAID, WAS THAT OF LOCATING PERSONNEL WHO COULD RUN THE REFUGEE CAMP. THE TASK WOULD NORMALLY BE ASSIGNED TO THE POLICE, BUT POLICE RESOURCES HAD BEEN STRETCHED TO THE LIMIT BY THE NEED TO OPERATE THE NEW NARCOTICS DETENTION AND REHABILITATION CENTERS ESTABLISHED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE CURRENT MAJOR DRIVE AGAINST NARCOTICS OFFENDERS. A SMALL COUNTRY, SINGAPORE DID NOT HAVE THE TRAINED MANPOWER TO STAFF THE REFUGEE CAMP IN ADDITION TO OTHER PRIORITY PROJECTS SUCH AS THE NARCOTICS DRIVE. LUM WONDERED WHETHER THE UNHCR WOULD BE ABLE TO PROVIDE QUALIFIED PERSONNEL TO HELP ADMINISTER AND STAFF THE CAMP.

4. EMBOFFS TOLD LUM THAT THEY DID NOT THEMSELVES HAVE THE ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS BUT THAT THEY WERE SURE UNHCR WOULD BE PREPARED TO HELP OUT WITH ADVICE AS WELL AS MATERIAL ASSISTANCE.

5. COMMENT: LUM'S COMMENTS INDICATE THAT THE GOS  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SINGAP 05283 020948Z

WORKING LEVEL IS STUDYING THE PROJECT SERIOUSLY, ALTHOUGH WITH SOME TREPIDATIONS, AND THAT IT HAS IDENTIFIED VARIOUS PROBLEM AREAS. THIS UNDERSCORES THE NEED FOR AN ADDITIONAL UNHCR INITIATIVE TO HELP THE SINGAPOREANS IN THEIR PLANNING. AN OFFER BY UNHCR TO SEND ONE OR TWO EXPERTS WITH EXPERIENCE IN SETTING UP AND OPERATING REFUGEE CAMPS TO ADVISE THE SINGAPOREANS MIGHT BE WELL RECEIVED.  
HOLDRIDGE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** REFUGEES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Sent Date:** 02-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1977SINGAP05283  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D770447-0287  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** SINGAPORE  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1977/newtext/t19771299/aaaadgpe.tel  
**Line Count:** 103  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** 5ec5d70c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION HA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 77 SINGAPORE 5242, 77 STATE 285189  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 25-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 378373  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** PROPOSED SINGAPORE TRANSIT CENTER FOR INDOCHINESE REFUGEES  
**TAGS:** SREF, SN  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/5ec5d70c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009